

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~striketrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1-8, 13 and 14 and ADD new claim 15 in accordance with the following:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An ingredient information management apparatus, comprising:

means for receiving menu information input through member terminals;

menu storage means for storing the menu information and amounts of ingredients necessary to prepare each menu indicated in the menu information;

ingredient amount searching means for searching out the ingredients and the amounts thereof, from the menu storage means, corresponding to said menu information;

sale unit storage means for storing a sale unit for every ingredient, the sale unit of each ingredient being stored in association with the stored menu information including ~~substantially similar~~ previously used ingredients of other menus;

sale unit searching means for searching out the sale unit, from the sale unit storage means, corresponding to said ingredient searched out by the ingredient amount searching means;

comparing means for comparing the amount of said ingredient searched out by the ingredient amount searching means with amounts of the previously used ingredients corresponding to the sale unit searched by the sale unit searching means and outputting a result indicative thereof; and

menu information searching means for searching out menu information, from the menu storage means, including said ingredient ~~in case that~~ when the result indicates that said amount of said ingredient is less than said sale unit.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An ingredient information management method, comprising:

receiving the menu information input through a member terminal;

storing the menu information and amounts of ingredients necessary to prepare each menu indicated in the menu information;

searching out the ingredients and the amounts thereof corresponding to said menu information;

storing a sale unit for every ingredient, the sale unit of each ingredient being stored in association with the stored menu information including previously used~~substantially similar~~ ingredients of other menus;

searching out the sale unit corresponding to the ingredient searched;

comparing the amount of said ingredient searched with amounts of ingredients corresponding to the sale unit searched and outputting a result indicative thereof; and

searching out menu information including said ingredient ~~in case that~~when the result indicates that the amount of said ingredient is less than said sale unit.

3. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A program allowing a computer to execute:

receiving the menu information input through a member terminal;

storing the menu information and amounts of ingredients necessary to prepare each menu indicated in the menu;

searching out the ingredients and the amounts thereof corresponding to said menu information;

storing a sale unit for every ingredient, the sale unit of each ingredient being stored in association with the stored menu information including ~~substantially similar~~ previously used ingredients of other menus;

searching out the sale unit corresponding to the ingredient searched;

comparing the amount of said ingredient searched with amounts of ingredients corresponding to the sale unit searched and outputting a result indicative thereof; and

searching out menu information including said ingredient in case that the result indicates that the amount of said ingredient is less than said sale unit.

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer readable storage medium which stores a program allowing a computer to execute:

receiving the menu information input through a member terminal;

storing the menu information and amounts of ingredients necessary to prepare each menu indicated in the menu;

searching out the ingredients and the amounts thereof corresponding to said menu information;

storing a sale unit for every ingredient, the sale unit of each ingredient being stored in association with the stored menu information including ~~substantially similar~~ previously used ingredients of other menus;

searching out the sale unit corresponding to the ingredient searched;

comparing the amount of said ingredient searched with amounts of ingredients corresponding to the sale unit searched and outputting a result indicative thereof; and

searching out menu information including said ingredient in case that the result indicates that the amount of said ingredient is less than said sale unit.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An expected sales computing apparatus provided with a readable storage medium storing a program allowing the apparatus to execute operations, comprising:

storing a first successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a first menu and a second successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, ingredients of the first menu are linked with ~~substantially similar~~ previously used ingredients of the second menu;

computing expected sales of the ingredients of the first menu based on the ingredients of the first menu, a number of distributions of the first menu, and the successful sale coefficients of the first menu; and

computing the expected sales of the ingredients of the second menu based on the ingredients of the second menu, a number of inquiries of the second menu, and the successful sale coefficients of the second menu.

6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A expected sales computing method, comprising:

storing a first successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a first menu and a second successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, ingredients of the first menu are linked with ~~substantially similar~~ previously used ingredients of the second menu;

computing expected sales of the ingredients of the first menu based on the ingredients of the first menu, a number of distributions of the first menu, and the successful sale coefficients of the first menu ; and

computing the expected sales of the ingredients of a second menu based on the ingredients of the second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, a number of inquiries of the second menu, and the successful sale coefficients of the second menu.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A program allowing a computer to execute:
storing a first successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a first menu and a second successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, ingredients of the first menu are linked with ~~substantially similar~~ previously used ingredients of the second menu;
computing expected sales of the ingredients of the first menu based on the ingredients of the first menu, a number of distributions of the first menu, and the successful sale coefficients of the first menu ; and
computing the expected sales of the ingredients of a second menu based on the ingredients of the second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, a number of inquiries of the second menu, and the successful sale coefficients of the second menu .

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer readable storage medium which stores a program allowing a computer to execute:
storing a first successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a first menu and a second successful sale coefficient representing a probability of purchasing ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, ingredients of the first menu are linked with ~~substantially similar~~ previously used ingredients of the second menu;
computing expected sales of the ingredients of the first menu based on the ingredients of the first menu, a number of distributions of the first menu, and the successful sale coefficients of the first menu; and
computing the expected sales of the ingredients of a second menu based on the ingredients of the second menu inquired in relation to the first menu, a number of inquiries of the second menu, and the successful sale coefficients of the second menu.

9. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The ingredient information management apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:
a means for transmitting ingredients of a first menu and a number of distributions of the first menu to a user terminal, and

a means for transmitting ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu and a number of the inquiries of the second menu to the user terminal.

10. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The ingredient information management method according to claim 2, further comprising:

transmitting ingredients of a first menu and a number of distributions of the first menu to a user terminal, and

transmitting ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu and a number of the inquiries of the second menu to the user terminal.

11. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The program according to claim 3 allowing a computer to further execute:

transmitting ingredients of a first menu and a number of distributions of the first menu to a user terminal, and

transmitting ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu and a number of the inquiries of the second menu to the user terminal.

12. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The computer readable storage medium according to claim 4 for storing a program allowing a computer to further execute:

transmitting ingredients of a first menu and a number of distributions of the first menu to a user terminal, and

transmitting ingredients of a second menu inquired in relation to the first menu and a number of the inquiries of the second menu to the user terminal.

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) An ingredient information management method, comprising:

storing menu information and amounts of ingredients necessary to prepare each menu indicated in the menu information and storing a sale unit for each ingredient of each menu; and

outputting data of an ingredient, a sale unit and an amount of the ingredient upon a menu search, where the amount of the ingredient indicated as a result of the menu search is compared with amounts of ingredients corresponding to the indicated sale unit and an indication is provided when the ingredient indicated is less than the sale unit and the sale unit of each ingredient is associated with the menu information including ~~substantially similar~~ previously used

ingredients of other menus.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of managing ingredient information of menu items, comprising:

associating an ingredient constituting a first menu item among the menu items with a ~~substantially similar~~ previously used ingredient constituting a second menu item among the menu items; and

searching ingredient information of each of the menu items responsive to a search request of the ingredient in the first menu item and indicating when the ingredient in the first menu item is less than an amount of the ~~substantially similar item~~ previously used ingredient of the second menu item.

15. (NEW) A method of managing ingredient information of menu items, comprising:
determining whether a remaining ingredient of a previously used menu is usable as a new ingredient of a currently selected menu; and

providing information indicating when the remaining ingredient of the previously used menu is less than an amount of the new ingredient of the currently selected menu upon determining that the remaining ingredient is usable as the new ingredient of the currently selected menu.